

EPA Responds to Tank Fire in Deer Park, Tx

On Sunday March 17, a fire broke out within a tank farm at the Intercontinental Terminals Company in Deer Park, Texas. A total of 11 tanks were involved in the fire, many of them collapsing with the contents burning or spilled within the containment area. OSCs Adam Adams, Steve Mason and Matt Loesel were deployed to the scene to integrate into the 24-hour response command structure, working closely with TCEQ, USCG and Harris County. Public Information Officer Carmen Assunto was also deployed to the Emergency Operations Center to integrate into the Joint Information Center providing updated EPA information to press inquires and work with other public information officers on communication strategies. With only minor sporadic flare-ups, the fire was extinguished early in the morning of Wednesday, March 20.

EPA began air monitoring of the surrounding communities, including identified environmental justice areas as well as neighborhoods surrounding public schools, to determine if any constituents of the fire were present above action levels. EPA also conducted water sampling to determine if any hazardous substances were present in the fire-fighting water run-off. The EPA's ASPECT Plane and TAGA mobile laboratory provided additional monitoring capabilities within the communities.

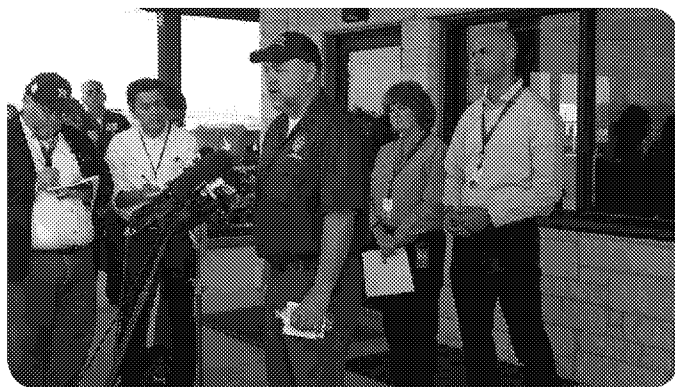
EPA personnel, working with our federal, state, and local partners continue to oversee the response and provide monitoring and sampling support to ensure the communities are properly protected. EPA is providing valuable recommendations to the responsible party and response organizations on environmental issues, including monitoring and sampling strategies, water response issues, and communicating to the public.



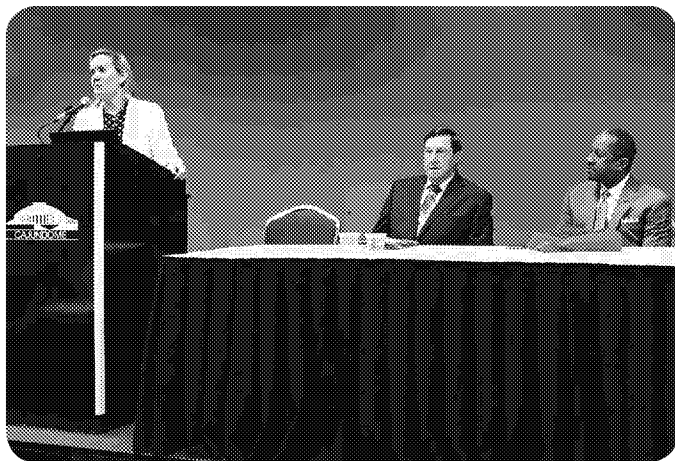
Local Fire Departments responds to fire in Deer Park



Intercontinental Terminal Fire

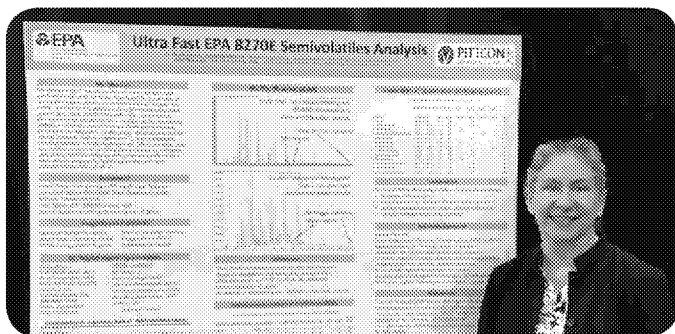


OSC Adam Adams holds a press briefing with the local media.



RA Idsal addressing the Louisiana Solid Waste Association March 21.

Houston Laboratory Chemist Presenting Scientific Poster



Meredith Clarage poses with her scientific poster.

Meredith Clarage presented a scientific poster at the Pittcon Conference & Expo, that showcases her work to modify EPA Method 8270 to make it more efficient, titled "Ultra-Fast EPA 8270E Semivolatiles Analysis". This has been a collaborative project with the Agilent Technologies utilizing the unique capabilities of a gas chromatograph(GC)/tandem mass spectrometer instead of the more conventional GC/ single quadrupole mass spectrometer. By sharing this modification of the method with other environmental labs this could help improve efficiencies of Semivolatile analysis across the country. Others at the Houston Lab that contributed to the project include Diane Gregg Reese, Rachel Rathbone, David Hiser, and Lisa Wool.



Chief of Staff Chancellor meeting with the North Alamo Water Supply Corporation celebrating completion of a regional wastewater collection and treatment project.

"Use or Lose" Restored

Good news! This week, we received guidance on how to restore "use or lose" annual leave that staff lost due to the shutdown and the December 24th holiday. In addition, we also learned that we can restore any travel compensatory time off that expired during the furlough. We shared these instructions with staff and supervisors this week, so please double check your emails if you missed it. If you have questions on whether this applies to you or how this works, we encourage you to talk with your supervisor. Our HR Specialist Tony Clifton, is also available if you have questions at 214-665-8395.

New Building Preparation



Thank you to everyone who attended and adopted plants and small personal items at yesterday's event in preparation for our upcoming. We hope the plants, books, mugs, decorations, and other personal items are enjoying their new adventures at their new homes. Also, special thanks to the Relocation Action Team's hard work in making this event a success!



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